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Remarks/Arguments

The office action dated July 25, 2005 (the "Office Action") has been received and carefully noted. The undersigned counsel for Applicant thanks the Examiner for granting a telephone interview on September 6, 2005 with respect to Applicant's proposed amendments. The claims discussed were claims 1, 7 and 12. The prior art of record discussed were Lo, Nakahara, Onoda and Chen, all of record.

Claims 1, 2, 7 and 12 have been amended. Support for the amended claims and the new claims can be found in, for example, FIGS. 1 through 6. Claims 13 through 16 have been cancelled without prejudice. The above amendments to the claims and the following remarks are submitted in response to the Office Action.

Claims 1, 3, 5 and 6 have been rejected by the Examiner under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,624,331 by Lo ("Lo"). Lo is directed to a golf club head which includes at least two (2) openings on the top area with a reinforcing bridge located therebetween, as shown in FIGS. 1, 2. In addition, the composite "cover" in Lo includes multiple pieces 12 and 14 which are inserted into the at least two (2) openings in the top plate only, which, "when assembled, together define the surfaces of the head." Col. 2, lns. 16-17. In addition, the inserts 12 and 14 rest on ledges 34 which are shown to be located below the top area (metal crown 16). FIG. 5.

In contrast, as defined in amended claim 1, the applicant claims the step of "forming a composite cover to fit over said top plate and said sole plate to cover metallic portions of said top plate and said rear portion of said sole plate as well as to cover said at least one opening in said top plate and said at least one opening in said rear portion of said sole plate." Thus, the composite cover in amended claim 1 fits over and covers the top plate and the rear portion of the sole plate (unlike in Lo in which the multiple pieces comprise part of the top plate only) and is therefore a cover rather than an insert. In addition, the composite cover is a single unit and is not comprised of multiple pieces as in Lo. Accordingly, because "a claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found . . . in a single prior art reference" (MPEP 2131), Applicant respectfully submits that independent claim 1 and its respective dependent claims 3, 5 and 6 are patentable and allowable over the Lo reference.

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Claim 2 has been rejected by the Examiner under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Lo in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,183,377 by Liang ("Liang") in further view of U.S. Patent No. 5,997,415 by Wood ("Wood"). In the Office Action, the Examiner notes that the golf club heads in Liang and Wood have plural openings in the sole plate. However, the Applicant notes that in Liang, there is no indication that the sole plate has plural openings or has a composite cover; rather, the golf club head 4 in Liang is one solid unit formed from a plurality of plates. Col. 2, lns. 32-38. Additionally, although the golf head in Wood may include multiple openings in the sole plate, the composite "cover" in Wood is comprised of multiple pieces 316, 318 and 320 which are "integrated with the substantially open top 302" and "integrated with sole plate 314," respectively. Col. 4, lns. 49-56. Together, the cited references do not teach or suggest the claim limitation of "a composite cover to fit over said top plate and said sole plate to cover metallic portions of said top plate and said rear portion of said sole plate as well as to cover said at least one opening in said top plate and said at least one opening in said rear portion of said sole plate." Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that dependent claim 2 is patentable and allowable over the references.

Claims 4, 7 and 9-11 have been rejected by the Examiner under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Lo in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,776,011 by Su ("Su"). The golf club head in Su is comprised of a number of component parts affixed together. Col. 3, lns. 40-43. The golf head in Su, however, does not include any openings in the top portion or sole portion thereof as shown in FIGS. 1 and 2. Moreover, the golf club head in Su includes "three distinct stamped pieces" and does not include the claim limitation of "a composite cover to fit over said top plate and said sole plate to cover metallic portions of said top plate and said rear portion of said sole plate as well as to cover said at least one opening in said top plate and said at least one opening in said rear portion of said sole plate." In addition, the Applicant notes that FIG. 4 of the golf head in Lo depicts a metal stiffener 30 which is part of the metal crown 16, and not part of the "composite cover" as discussed at Col. 2, ln. 34. As noted previously, the composite "cover" in Lo includes multiple pieces 12 and 14 which are inserted into the at least two (2) openings in the top plate, form part of the top of the golf club head itself. Thus, together, the cited references do not teach or suggest the claim limitation of "forming a composite cover to fit over said top plate and said sole plate to cover metallic portions of said top plate and said rear portion of said sole plate as well as to cover said at least one opening in said top plate and said at least one opening

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in said rear portion of said sole plate." Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claim 7 and dependent claims 4 and 9-11 are patentable and allowable over the references.

Claim 8 has been rejected by the Examiner under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Lo in view of Su, Liang and Wood. Applicant notes that none of the golf club heads in any of these references includes the claim limitation of "forming a composite cover to fit over said top plate and said sole plate to cover metallic portions of said top plate and said rear portion of said sole plate as well as to cover said at least one opening in said top plate and said at least one opening in said rear portion of said sole plate." Thus, together, Lo in view of Su, Liang and Wood do not teach or suggest the limitations in independent amended claims 1 and 7 and their respective dependent claims. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that dependent claim 8 is patentable and allowable over the references.

Claim 12 has been rejected by the Examiner under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Appn. No. 2003/0125127 to Nakahara et al. ("Nakahara"). Applicant respectfully notes that, in Nakahara, FIGS. 2A-2C illustrate a golf head with one hole X1; FIGS. 3A-3L illustrate a golf head with one hole X1; and FIGS. 4A-4B illustrate a golf head with two holes X1 in the top plate only. FIGS. 2A-2C; 3A-3L; 4A-4B. In contrast, amended claim 12 includes "a metallic assembly . . . including at least one opening in the top plate and at least one opening in an upward extending portion of the sole plate." Thus, none of the above-described figures includes two holes, one of which is in the top plate and one of which is in the sole plate. Furthermore, Applicant respectfully notes that the neck 1 illustrated in the golf head of Nakahara is analogous to the hosel 56 in Applicant's invention and is not considered to be part of the sole 3 in Nakahara or the sole plate 20 in Applicant's invention, as evidenced by the separate numbering thereof. Applicant further respectfully notes that although FIGS. 5A-5B and FIGS. 8A-8C in Nakahara include a golf head with one hole in the sole 3 and one hole in the crown 4, the golf heads include two plastics covering the holes ("sole and crown portions 3 and 4 . . . made of fiber reinforced plastics") or two "hole parts" covering the holes. ¶ 024, 028. The golf head clubs illustrated in the above-described figures in Nakahara do not include the claim limitation of amended claim 1 of "a composite cover . . . substantially covering metallic portions as well as the at least one opening of the top plate and the upward extending portion of the sole plate." Moreover, FIGS. 7A-7C illustrate a golf head substantially made of "fiber reinforced plastics." ¶ 26. There is no indication of a "metal assembly" or any openings thereof with respect to these embodiments in Nakahara, in contrast to the claim limitations set forth in amended claim 12. Accordingly, because "a claim is anticipated only if each and

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every element as set forth in the claim is found . . . in a single prior art reference" (MPEP 2131), Applicant respectfully submits that independent claim 12 and its respective dependent claims 15 and 16 are patentable and allowable over the Nakahara reference.

By the foregoing Amendments to the claims and arguments presented above, the Applicant has attempted to respond to each remaining issue from the Final Office Action. In addition, four claims (13-16) have been cancelled so as to reduce the number of claims, and issues, if an appeal is necessary. Entry of this amendment is therefore requested even if the amendment does not result in an allowance of the claims. If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call Applicant's undersigned representative at (213) 689-6565 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 07-1853. Should such additional fees be associated with an extension of time, applicant respectfully requests that this paper be considered a petition therefore.

Respectfully submitted,



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